

From Mahjong to Loving Magical Girls: LGBTQ+ Representation in Animation in 2024



2024 began slowly, with the premiere of the ecchi magical girl series, with yuri themes, *Gushing Over Magical Girls*, on January 3, and *Pon no Michi*, a yurish anime centered on mahjong, on January 6. While the former was on HIDIVE, the latter never aired on any streaming platforms available in Western countries. Following that, there was the boy's love comedy *Cherry Magic! Thirty Years of Virginity Can Make You a Wizard?!* and *Metallic Rouge* beginning on January 11. It was an audacious way to begin 2024, [following a year](#) with twenty-three anime with direct or indirect yuri themes, which was a decline [from 2022](#). This year, in contrast, had only slightly more. A total of twenty-six anime with direct, or indirect, yuri themes aired this year.¹

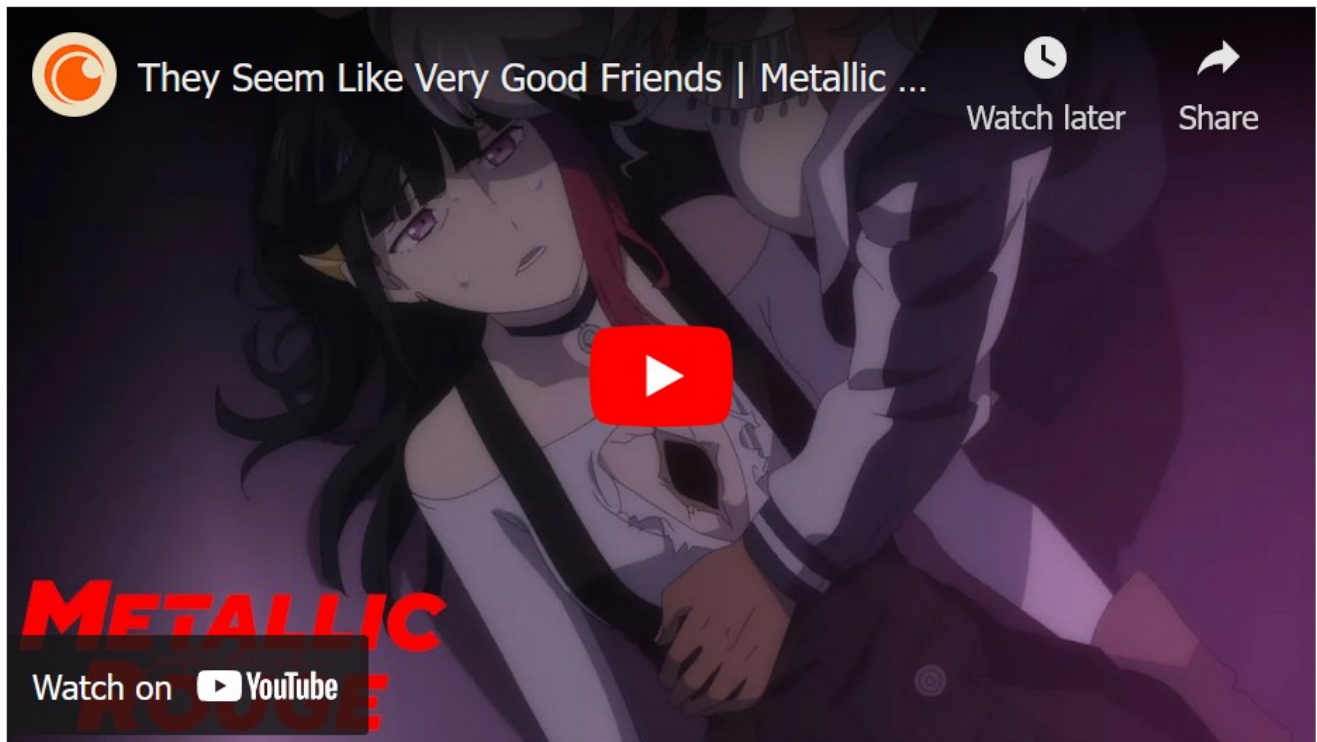
¹ In 2022, articles in *Yuri Anime News* stated that thirty-six anime (and three films) with yuri themes aired, with a decline to twenty-three anime, and four films, [in 2023](#). This year, there were twenty-one new anime with strong or subtextual yuri themes, whether more romantic or not. This included *Gushing Over Magical Girls* (direct); *Dungeon Meshi* (subtext between Marcille and Falin); *'Tis Time for "Torture," Princess* (subtext between Vanilla Peschutz and the Princess); *Whisper Me a Love Song* (direct); *A Salad Bowl of Eccentrics* (subtext); *Beloved Zako Streamer* (ongoing); *Girls Band Cry* (subtext); *My Deer Friend Nokotan* (subtext), *VTuber Legend* (subtext), *Mayonaka Punch* (subtext), *Pon no Michi* (weak subtext), *Metallic Rouge* (weak subtext), *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night* (subtext), *Rinkai!* (weak subtext), and *Train to the End of the World* (subtext). Others included *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio* (subtext), *Himitsu no AiPri* (subtext), *Narenare: Cheer for You!* (subtext), *Dungeon People* (subtext between two protagonists),

From January 19, 2024 to February 2, 2024, the first season of [Hazbin Hotel](#), the indieish black/horror comedy musical animation, with many mature themes, premiered. Amid whirling claims about the series on social media, this animation features a central queer couple: Charlie Morningstar (Erika Henningsen), the princess of Hell, and her girlfriend and manager, Vaggie (Stephanie Beatriz). Series creator Vivienne Medrano is a Salvadoran-American, and bisexual, animator and director. She's known for her ongoing indie animation, [Helluva Boss](#), her VivziePop YouTube channel, and roles in [Ollie & Scoops](#), *EddsWorld*, and *Too Loud*. *Ollie & Scoops*, *EddsWorld*, and *Helluva Boss* are still airing.

In early February, the *YuruYuri* spinoff film, *Ōmuro-ke Movie: Dear Sisters*, released in Japan. The same month, *Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur* began its second season. The previous month, the second season of *The Ghost and Molly McGee*, which included some supporting LGBTQ+ characters, came to an end. Also, that month, *Wonderful PreCure!* took the spot of [Soaring Sky! Pretty Cure](#), which ended, with some yuri vibes between Mashiro and Sora. *Wonderful PreCure!* has some arguable yuri subtext between Mayu and Yuki Nekoyashiki (a girl and her pet cat) but not as much as *Soaring Sky*. Also, AnimeJapan users [nominated](#) five yuri manga for anime adaptation.

The same month, two other series with LGBTQ+ characters premiered: *Starship Q Star* on February 6 and *The Second Best Hospital in the Galaxy* on February 22. The former has [at least five queer characters](#), some of which are bisexual, lesbian, and pansexual. It's a [short animated series](#) based on a fiction podcast by Meegan May and Lauren Anderson. The latter is a series on Prime Video and has mature themes. It features queer, genderless, and bisexual characters.

Acro Trip (weak subtext), and *The Stories of Girls Who Couldn't Be Magicians* (weak subtext). There was one series with yuriish themes which continued in 2024: *Soaring Sky! PreCure*. Also, there was: the third season of *Laid-Back Camp*, the second season of *Nijiyon Animation*, the second season of *Shy*, and the third season of *Love Live! Superstar!!*, all of which had yurish themes. Originally I'd added *Murder Mystery of the Dead* as having yuri subtext, but Western services *never* licensed it, so I cannot evaluate it. That comes to a total of twenty-six anime with direct or subtextual yuri themes in 2024, and two more if the third season of *Sound! Euphonium* and *Ranma 1/2* are counted. This was accompanied by seven films: *Ōmuro-ke Movie: Dear Sisters*, *Ōmuro-ke: Dear Friends*, the two-part [Bocchi the Rock!](#) compilation film, *BanG Dream! Spring Sunshine*, *Lost Cat*, and *Love Live! Nijigasaki High School Idol Club Final Chapter* [Part 1], the *BanG Dream! Spring Sunshine*, *Lost Cat* [part 1 of the [BanG Dream! It's MyGo!!!!](#) compilation film], *BanG Dream! Sing, Songs That Become Us & Film Live* [part 2 of the *BanG Dream! It's MyGo!!!!* compilation film]. I'm not sure if the [all-female idol movie](#), *☆Ris the Movie -Full Energy!!-* has yuri themes, nor *Uma Musume Pretty Derby: Beginning of a New Era*.



screencap of the opening screen for a video on YouTube, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knPUGTCO8jM>

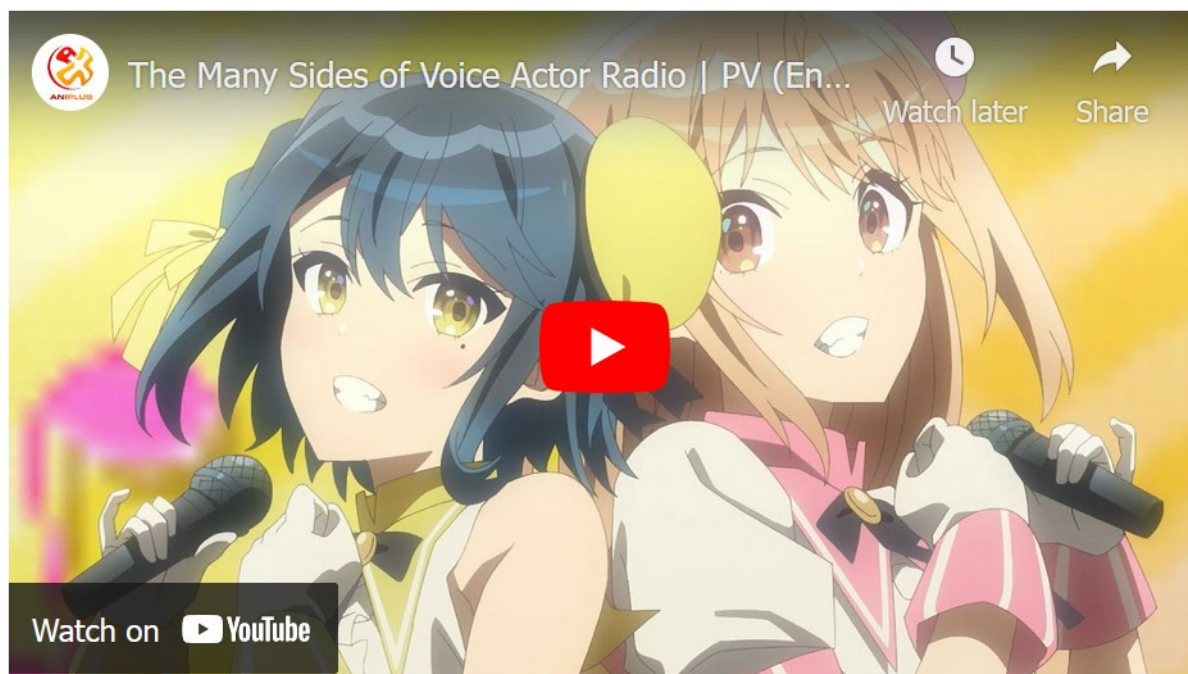
March marked the end of *Metallic Rouge*, which had some yurish vibes between Rouge Redstar and Naomi Orthmann, especially in the conclusion where Naomi merges with Rouge. It reminded me of Gem fusions in *Steven Universe* grounded in friendship and love. *Cherry Magic! Thirty Years of Virginity Can Make You a Wizard?!* was one of the only boy's love series I've watched to-date, apart from *Sasaki and Miyano* and *Antique Bakery* (only with some yaoi themes). It also marked the premiere of two series with LGBTQ+ characters: *X-Men '97* and *Ark: The Animated Series*. I've been talking about the latter for years, since Paramount did not release it in 2022 or 2023. It silently released, without any promotion, on Paramount+. I only learned about the release from Wikipedia, which says a lot.

X-Men '97 continues the 1990s series, *X-Men: The Animated Series*, and was created by a Black gay man, Beau DeMayo for Disney+. It features Kevin Sydney / Morph who identifies as non-binary and uses they/them pronouns. DeMayo was [fired](#) by Marvel Studios before the show's release, reportedly because [he was difficult to work with](#), and the fact he had OnlyFans account. Disney executives did not give him a warm reception. They didn't care about his sexual orientation or race. Development on the third season [has already](#) begun. *Ark: The Animated Series* [features](#) Victoria Walker

and her wife, Helena Walker, an anthropologist. Victoria's character is voiced by trans male actor Elliot Page (who is queer and non-binary), the first voice acting role for Page since his gender transition. This is his first main voice role. Fans of the Ark video game disliking this series did not dampen by excitement.

Ark: The Animated Series dropped without any warning on Paramount+. Queerness and diversity is central. In fact, Helena, who is voiced by Madeleine Madden, is Aboriginal, and [a lesbian](#). She [allies](#) with a Chinese woman named Meiyin Li ([voiced](#) by Michelle Yeoh), along with other Black, Lakota, and Inuit characters. Although Victoria [dies early](#) in the series, she becomes a key part of Helena's story, as she's often thinking about her wife. After she's isekai'd to a new land known as "the ARK," she becomes friendly, and romantically closer, to Meiyin. Both share a kiss in the sixth episode. The villain even uses Helena's [love for Meiyin](#) to try and trap her. This series came at a time that *Bravern* [became](#) (or already was?) a gay robot show and *Dungeon Meshi* had yuri themes [abound](#), particularly [between](#) the characters Marcille and Falin, known as "Farcille" by shippers.

April was a big month for yuri fans. *Shūmatsu Train Doko e Iku?* (also called *Train to the End of the World*) premiered on April 1st. *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night* and *Girls Band Cry* premiered on April 6th. *Seiyuu Radio no Uraomote* (also called *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*) premiered on April 10th. *Whisper Me a Love Song* premiered on April 13th. *Laid-Back Camp* season 3 [premiered](#) on [April 4th](#). Platonic relationships, with yuri undertones, remain intact between Outdoor Activities Club members Aoi Inuyama, Nadeshiko Kagamihara, Chiaki Ōgaki, and Ena Saitō. Rin Shima and Ayano Toki would be right at home with *Super Cub* protagonists Koguma, Reiko, and Shii Eniwa, who don't camp, but use their motorbikes, specifically a Honda Super Cub, Honda CT110, and Little Cub, throughout the series. Rin rides a Yamaha Vino 125 scooter. Ayano rides a Honda Ape 100 minibike.



PV for *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*, still available on YouTube at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zuiuET_cbQ8&pp=ygUjVGhlIE1hbnkgU2lkZXMgb2YgVm9pY2UgQWN0b3IqUmFkaW8%3D)

[v=5zuiuET_cbQ8&pp=ygUjVGhlIE1hbnkgU2lkZXMgb2YgVm9pY2UgQWN0b3IqUmFkaW8%3D](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zuiuET_cbQ8&pp=ygUjVGhlIE1hbnkgU2lkZXMgb2YgVm9pY2UgQWN0b3IqUmFkaW8%3D).

Previously, Yuri Anime News [said](#) they were most excited about *Whisper Me a Love Song* and *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*. This was [the original anime glut](#) the account had talked about. Otherwise, anime centered on women, but not necessarily with yuri subtext, released in April, including *Rinkai!* which focuses on women cyclers (on April 9th), and *Highspeed Etoile*, which featured high-speed auto racing. *Rinkai* centered on five girls who like watching women's cycling events and begin cycling together. There's platonic feelings between the five main girls and between other participants (two were implied to be girlfriends). It was only available on less-than-legal websites. *Highspeed Etoile* is [relatively boring](#) (despite good animation and some but *weak* character development in [the first episode](#)). It wasn't as strong as [Kizuna no Allele](#), a mediocre series with some romantic subtext between Hakari and Rin.

These anime were divided between two streaming platforms. *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night* and *Whisper Me a Love Song* aired on HIDIVE. *Laid-Back Camp* season 3, [Train to the End of the World](#), *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*, and *Highspeed Etoile* aired on Crunchyroll. *Nijiyon Animation*, a *Love Live! Nijigasaki High School Idol Club* spinoff, premiered on April 5th on Crunchyroll. *Girls Band Cry* premiered only in Japan, meaning it could only be watched on less-than-

legal sites outside Japan. The first episode featured protagonist Momoka Kwaragi describing her roommate Kawasaki as a “guy who likes guys,” opening Nina Iseri to gay people and identities. Similarly, the first episode of the *Jellyfish Can’t Swim in the Night* had [yuri\(ish\) subtext](#) between protagonists Mahiru Kōzuki (also known as “Yoru Mitsuki”) and Kano Yamanouchi (also known as Nonoka Tachibana), as they begin forming a group together.

Nijiyon Animation had short episodes, ranging from three to five minutes long. This included yuri subtext between Ayumu Uehara and Yu Takasaki, like in [the original series](#), even though they’re chibis. There’s subtext between other characters and many rainbow motifs. In *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*, there’s romantic subtext between protagonists Yuhi Yugure and Yasumi Utatane who help each other when it counts, even if they aren’t the best-of-friends off-screen and have their spats. *Whisper Me a Love Song* broke through. It centers on the growing relationship between Yori and Himari, with questions about whether their love can come together or will go “out of tune.” With airing of *Girls Band Cry*, *Whisper Me a Love Song*, *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*, *Nijiyon Animation*, and *Jellyfish Can’t Swim in the Night*, [some predicted](#) that spring 2024 could become “the season of lesbian anime musicians.”

The same month, the thirteen-episode third season of *Sound! Euphonium*, a series some criticized for queerbaiting romantic feelings [between Kumiko Oumae and Reina Kousaka](#), premiered on April 7th on Crunchyroll. *Himitsu no AiPri* premiered (on April 7th). It had two female leads, Himari Aozora and Mizuki Hoshikawa. It’s part of the Pretty Series franchise which has “has [long revolved](#) around the joint concepts of song, dance, and fashion.” A slice-of-life boy’s love anime entitled *Welcome Home* (also known as *Tadaima, Okaeri*), based on a manga of the same name, premiered on April 9th. *Tonbo* aired on Prime Video, reminding me of *Birdie Wing*, without yuri subtext. This golf anime has female friendship (mainly in season 2). *Tadaima, Okaeri* falls into [the Omegaverse genre](#), but comments, in some ways, on homophobia and other discrimination by focusing on two married gay college grads, Hiromu and Masaki Fujiyoshi, with a first-born child: Hakari.



Preview for *Dear Friends* film, available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4l_cQoOV1E&pp=ygUXxYxtdXJvLWtlOiBEZWZyIEZyaWVuZHM%3D

In early May, in their three-episode check-in, [reviewers on Anime Feminist](#) praised four series with direct or indirect yuri themes: *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*, *Train to the End of the World*, *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night*, and *Whisper Me a Love Song*, and one with yaoi themes (*Tadaima, Okaeri*). Chiaki Hirai noted that *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio* isn't as critical as [Oshi no Ko](#) of the business, but “does touch upon the professional pressures talents feel in the field” and pointed to some fan service along with a “yuri aspect.” Toni Sun Prickett praised *Train to the End of the World* as “almost like a madcap *Kino's Journey*” and described Reimi's character as “a well written naturally darker skinned character.”

Alex Henderson gave a lukewarm view of *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night* as having big ideas but uneven storytelling, while saying the series remains “complicated.” Caitlin Moore said that *Tadaima, Okaeri* is a “show about two men living in wedded bliss with their cute kid,” and praised Masaki and Hiromu's relationship as a believable married couple. Lastly, Henderson described

Whisper Me a Love Song as about communication and miscommunication, with messy but earnest teenage dilemmas destined to be at the show's heart.²

In the spring, *Let's Go, Bananas!*, a children's animation featuring two gay dads, aired on Canadian television. Yuri fans reported that *BanG Dream! It's MyGO!!!!!* would [release](#) two anime movie compilations in 2024. On April 21st, staff of *Yuri Anime News* [released](#) a watchlist for spring yuri(ish) series, including *Whisper Me a Love Song*, *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio*, *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night*, *Train to the End of the World*, *Girls Band Cry*, *Laid-Back Camp* (season 3), and *Sound! Euphonium* (season 3). On April 25th, *Velma*'s second season premiered on Max, including a non-binary character / Hex Girl named Amber. Amber uses they/them pronouns and Sara Ramirez, a non-binary actor, voices Amber. The series features Velma and Daphne, who are bisexual. Daphne has two moms (Donna and Linda). This is her second big [voice role](#) apart from Queen Miranda in *Sofia the First*.

Previously, it had been [announced](#) that *Bocchi the Rock!* compilation films would release on June 7th and August 9th. Also, in May, *Uma Musume Pretty Derby: Beginning of a New Era* premiered. The following month, *Ōmuro-ke: Dear Friends*, the second *YuruYuri* film, released in Japan, [on June 21st](#). By June's end, eight series had ended: *Laid-Back Camp* (June 20st), *Salad Bowl of Eccentrics* (June 21st), *Nijiyon Animation* (June 21st), *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night* (June 22nd), *Train to the End of the World* (June 24th), *Rinkai!* (June 25th) *Girls Band Cry* (June 28th), and *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio* (June 26th). All of them only had yuri subtext. On June 29th, *My Adventures with Superman* showed [its queer chops](#). Livewire and Heatwave [made clear](#) their love for one another ([even kissing](#)). They work with Lois, Jimmy, Brain, and Monsieur Mallah to help save Clark from Kara.

2 Also, in 2024, there were articles in *Anime Feminist* critically examining [BanG Dream! It's MyGO!!!!!](#) (see [here](#)), [Revolutionary Girl Utena](#), [Yurikuma Arashi](#), and [I'm in Love with the Villainess](#) (see [here](#)), among others, which are all anime with direct or indirect yuri themes, to name a few articles.



Figure 1: Video clip from Mayonaka Punch on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysWyDpL_b28&pp=ygUOTWF5b25ha2EgUHVuY2g%3D.

With the coming of July, new series with yuri subtext [came to the fore](#). This included *Narenare: Cheer for You!* (also known as [Nanare Hananare](#)) on July 7th, *My Deer Friend Nokotan* (also known as *Shikanoko Nokonoko Koshitantan*) on July 7th, *Mayonaka Punch* (also known as Mayonaka Panchi or *Midnight Punch*) on July 8th, and *VTuber Legend: How I Went Viral After Forgetting to Turn Off My Stream* (also known as *Buichūbā nanda ga Haishin Kiriwasuretara Densetsu ni Natteta*) on July 8th. Of these series, *Mayonaka Punch* and *VTuber Legend* (before episode 5) were two of my favorites. The former had a vampire in love with a human whose blood she wants to suck because she first saw her in a sexy dream before she woke up after sleeping for twenty years. Like [other reviewers](#), this series really dazzled me when it premiered, with Masaki as a “girl failure” protagonist.

This was joined by *Shy* season 2 on July 1st and *Senpai Is an Otokonoko* (also known as *This Is Him* and *Senpai Is an Otokonoko: My Crossdressing Classmate*) on July 5th. For *Shy*, the first season had (romantic) yuri subtext between Teru Momijiyama (voiced by Shino Shimoji), and her friend Iko Koishikawa (voiced by Nao Tōyama), and between [Teru and her hero colleague Pepesha](#) Andreanova (voiced by Mamiko Noto), as I noted [in December of last year](#). In this season, Teru continues to transform into a superhero named Shy using Heart-Shift Bracelets, and even goes on a date with her

friend Iko in one episode. In another episode, the villain uses her power to make Lady Black gay for Shy and even attempts to attack her with a needle to make her “feel better.”

Narenare: Cheer for You!, *My Deer Friend Nokotan*, *Mayonaka Punch*, and *VTuber Legend* hinted at yuri subtext before their premieres. *Senpai Is an Otokonoko* centered [on a crossdressing boy](#) named Makoto Hanoka. He dresses as a girl and is crushed on Saki Aoi, who thinks he is a girl. Although she gets rejected after confessing her feelings, she is bisexual, not minding his gender, and *wants* to become his girlfriend. Makoto’s male childhood friend, Ryuji Taiga, *wants* to be his boyfriend.³ This anime had more queer themes than *Astro Note*, which ended on June 21st. It featured male supporting character Ren Wakabayashi wearing a dress. In that series, female protagonist Mira Gotokuji rejects her “destined” royal title, declaring that things decided at birth are *not* always right. She decides to live on Earth with the man she loves, Takumi Miyasaki, a chef at her lodge she manages.

Unlike earlier in the year, *Narenare: Cheer for You!*, *My Deer Friend Nokotan*, *Mayonaka Punch*, *Shy*, *Senpai Is an Otokonoko* and *VTuber Legend* all aired on Crunchyroll.⁴ Since *Jellyfish Can’t Swim in the Night* ended on June 23th, and the last two episodes of *Whisper Me a Love Song* were delayed, the streaming service posed no competition for presently-airing series which could pull in queer viewers. Otherwise, the fate of the HIDIVE streaming service is somewhat in limbo, with financial warnings in recent years and [trouble](#) this year, although [some claim](#) that the parent company is “undervalued.” As for *Narenare*, [it was heartfelt](#), takes cheerleading as a serious sport, has gorgeous animation, and has some “yuri-potential” from the get-go, but *no* canon yuri relationships.

3 The series also focuses on the particularities of gender norms, with Makoto wanting “girly” stuff (like high heels and a pink purse) when he is younger, but his parents steering him toward “boyish” stuff instead.

4 The series, based Nana Nanato’s Japanese light novel series, centers around Awayuki Kokorone (voiced by Ayane Sakura). She’s a VTuber [who forgets](#) to turn off her livestream and gets drunk. While the series [is better](#) than the mediocre *Kizuna no Allele* which aired last year for [two seasons](#), *VTuber Legend* uses the protagonist’s “sapphic attraction [as a bawdy punchline](#).” Sakura voiced characters in *Wandering Son*, *Tari Tari*, *Non Non Biyori*, *Is the Order a Rabbit?*, *Sleepy Princess in the Demon Castle*, *Do It Yourself!!*, and *Spy x Family*. Other voice actors for this series have brought characters to light in *Birdie Wing* (Kaede Oikawa), *Bocchi the Rock!* (Ryō Yamada), *Akebi’s Sailor Uniform* (Riona Shijou), *Narenare* (Noichigo Izawa), *Flip Flappers* (Papika), *The Executioner and Her Way of Life* (Ashuna), *My Master Has No Tail* (Mameda), *Bloom Into You* (Sayaka Saeki), and *Mayonaka Punch* (Yuki). The series is clearly memeable and loved by some yuri fans. After the fifth episode, it went into a weird / disturbing territory. I had to drop it.



Thirty-second spot for Love Live Nijigasaki film [Love Live! Nijigasaki High School Idol Club Final Chapter] on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8H-ScC4POg>.

In early July, a live-action adaptation of *Ayaka Is In Love With Hiroko* [began streaming](#) on GagaOOLala and yuri fans announced that [with the release of volume 10](#), the *Whisper Me A Love Song* manga “will have 1 million copies in circulation”! In late July, yuri fans announced that *Lycoris Recoil* would [have six](#) slice-of-life movie shorts produced, along with continued production of [an anime project](#) related to the series. This was followed by *Batman: Caped Crusader* premiering [in early August](#), which featured Harley Quinn (who is bisexual) in a relationship with a lesbian woman: Renee Montoya. Earlier in the month yuri fans announced that *Girls Band Cry* [would finally](#) be able to be streamed on Prime Video and other platforms in North America beginning on August 15!

On September 6th, *Love Live! Nijigasaki High School Idol Club Final Chapter*, the first film in a trilogy based off the *Love Live! Nijigasaki High School Idol Club* franchise, premiered. The series had yuri subtext and the film serves as the *first* part of the final chapter of the series. There’s romantic subtext between [Yū Takasaki](#) and [Ayumu Uehara](#); [Emma Verde](#) and [Karin Asaka](#); [Shizuku Ōsaka](#) and Karin Asaka; and some subtext for [Himeno Ayanokōji](#), Setsuna Yūki, Mia Taylor, Lanzhu Zhong, Shioriko Mifune, Drama Club President, Haruka Konoe, Kanata Konoe, Kasumi Nakasu, Rina Tennōji,

and Ai Miyashita. This film will be more than “[shipping fuel](#)” (as some described the original series) or seen only as yuri [through goggles](#).

Otherwise, on September 8th, the 32nd episode of *Wonderful PreCure!*, “Favorite Animal At The Zoo,” the newest PreCure series this year (to be replaced by *Witchy Pretty Cure!! Future Days* next year), with the end of *Soaring Sky! Pretty Cure* on January 28th, premiered. It has some yuri subtext between Mayu and Yuki, which some might see as “platonic,” while the other two protagonists, Komugi and Iroha [are good friends](#). Those themes are carried over into *Wonderful PreCure! The Movie* which premiered on September 13th in Japan. As for the episode “Favorite Animal At The Zoo,” it brought back the five protagonists of *Soaring Sky!*, specifically Sora, Mashiro, Tsubasa Yuunagi, Ageha Hijiri, and Ellee-chan. At one point, Sora said Mashiro’s smile is as “smiley and bright” as a quakko, which makes her happy to hear. Unfortunately, they didn’t have much more of a role in the episode.

Anime News Network announced, [on September 13th](#), that *Girls Band Cry* would have two compilation films, with an unknown release date. This followed, some months before, cast members Mirei and Natsu, who perform as Subaru Awa and Tomo Ebizuka, [going on “temporary hiatus”](#) from public performances as the Togenashi Togeari band (the other five major band members will continue performing). There’s no plans for series continuation, at present, despite [reportedly planned](#) series “expansion.” There will be a crossover event with characters from *BanG Dream! It’s MyGO!!!!* in January 2025.



Clip from indie anime on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jGe50c5Plds>.

On September 18th, *My Deer Friend Nokotan*, a comedic slice-of-life yurish anime, [aired](#) its final episode on Prime Video. With the series ending, only a few series with subtextual yuri themes continued: *Shy* (season 2), *Mayonaka Punch*, *Dungeon People*, and *Narenare*. Around the same time, Molly Ostertag published a newsletter [describing the series](#) she had been working on: *Neon Galaxy*. Disney passed on it. The series reportedly had queer themes. Some reported that *Inside Out 2* [had been changed](#) to make the protagonist, Riley Andersen, “less gay,” including tonal and lighting changes in certain scenes between Riley and an older girl named Val. As for *Narenare*, the final episode aired on September 22nd. It ended with yuri subtext and members of PomPoms (the cheerleader protagonists) cheering for Mari, a senpai of Kanata Misora, on her school’s cheerleading team. They saw her as part of their family.

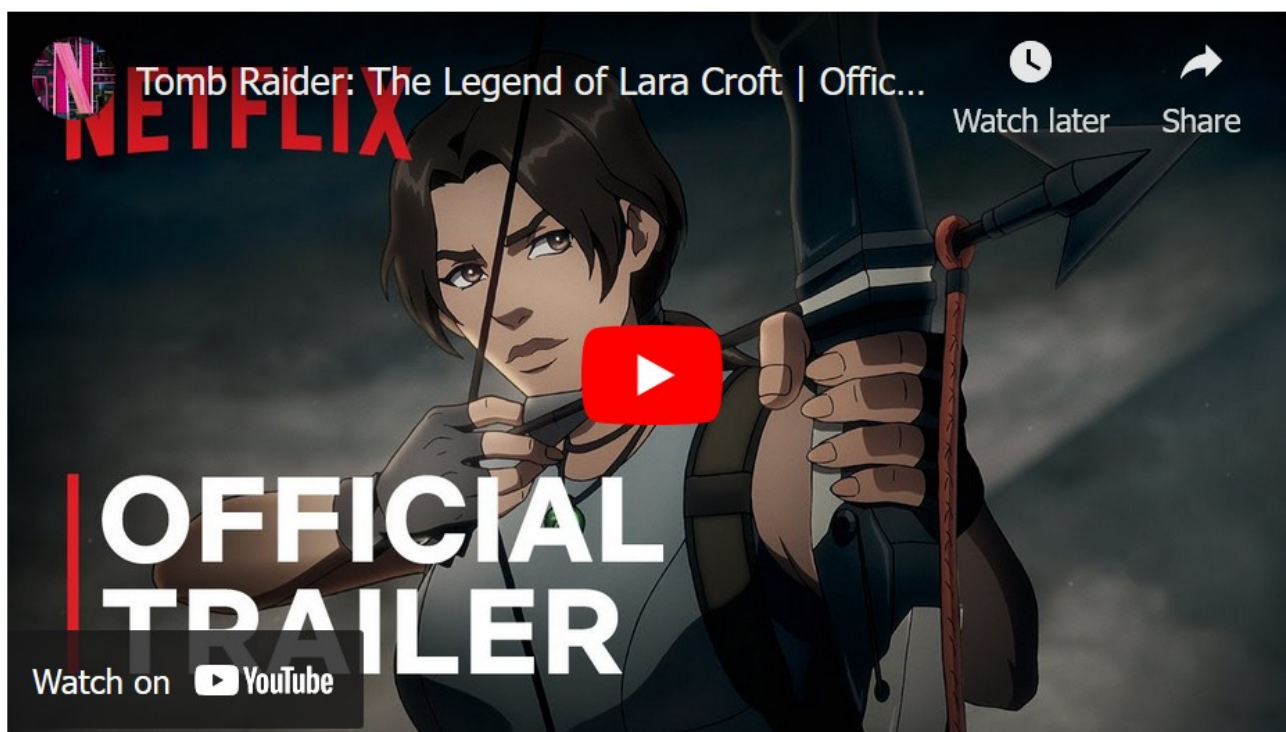
Within a two-day timeframe, from September 22nd to September 23rd, *Narenare*, *Mayonaka Punch*, and *Shy* ended. *Senpai is an Otokonoko* followed on September 26th. *Dungeon People* [on September 27th](#). *Mayonaka Punch* ended with yuri subtext summarized by “strong bonds” between Masaki and Live (involving a blood pact). *Shy* season 2 ends with Teru/Shy and Iku running off together while cutely holding hands and laughing. *Senpai is an Otokonoko* ends with Makoto visiting

her dress-making grandfather and asks for his mom's acceptance, saying he doesn't want to live as a boy or as a girl but as "himself." In late September, a new promo for *I've Been Killing Slimes for 300 Years and Maxed Out My Level 2* season 2 [released](#). Others [noted](#) that Japanese man Naoya Ishikawa, known for [indie anime production](#), screened an indie anime shown above, featuring a mermaid and human girl, in Japan.⁵

On October 4th, *Magilumiere Co. Ltd*, also known as *Magilumiere Magical Girls Inc.*, premiered on Prime Video. Masahiro Hiraoka directed the magical girl series. Shingo Nagai assisted as writer and Hidehiro Asama as character designer. Nagai and Asama previously worked on yur(ish) series such as *Lapis Re:Lights* and *Miss Kobayashi's Dragon Maid*, and films like *Liz and the Blue Bird*, along with woman-centered series like *Girly Air Force*, *Bofuri*, *Violet Evergarden*, *Tamako Market*, and *Sound! Euphonium*. Hiraoka did CG design for *Heartcatch Precure!*, *Kakegurui Twin*, *Suite Precure*, and background art for *Spy x Family* season 2. Some previously praised the manga as [Sailor Moon satire](#). While I thought there might be some yuri subtext after reading the manga's first volume, it fell more into the "found family" idea, including between protagonists Kana Sakuragi and Hitomi Koshigaya.

A few days later, on October 6th, *Love Live! Superstar!!* season 3 [premiered](#) on Crunchyroll. The series centers on female friendship and has some yuri subtext. This differs from *Acro Trip*, which has weak yuri subtext. In that series, Miku Itō, who voiced protagonist Date Chizuko, also voiced characters, this year, in: *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night* (Mahiru Kōzuki), *Narenare: Cheer for You!* (Megumi Kaionji), and *The Many Sides of Voice Actor Radio* (Yasumi Utatane/Yumiko Satō). Additionally, she voiced characters in yur(ish) *BanG Dream!* (Kokoro Tsurumaki), *I've Been Killing Slimes for 300 Years and Maxed Out My Level* (Fatla), *The Aquatope on White Sand* (Kukuru Misakino), *Princess Connect! Re:Dive* (Kokoro/Kokoro Natsume), *Yurikuma Arashi* (Katyusha Akae), and *Akebi's Sailor Uniform* (Neko Kamimoku), and Misuzu Moritani in the yuri film, *Fragtime*. She prominently voiced protagonist Akina Kubo in *Kubo Won't Let Me Be Invisible*, a non-yuri series.

⁵ On September 27, the first part of the *BanG Dream! My GO!!!!* anime compilation film, entitled *BanG Dream! Spring Sunshine, Lost Cat*, aired. Like the series, it would have yurish themes.



Official trailer for part 1 of Tomb Raider: The Legend of Lara Croft on YouTube:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oe7CVCjgCzI&pp=ygUSbGFyYSBjcm9mdCBuZXRmbGl4)

[v=Oe7CVCjgCzI&pp=ygUSbGFyYSBjcm9mdCBuZXRmbGl4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oe7CVCjgCzI&pp=ygUSbGFyYSBjcm9mdCBuZXRmbGl4).

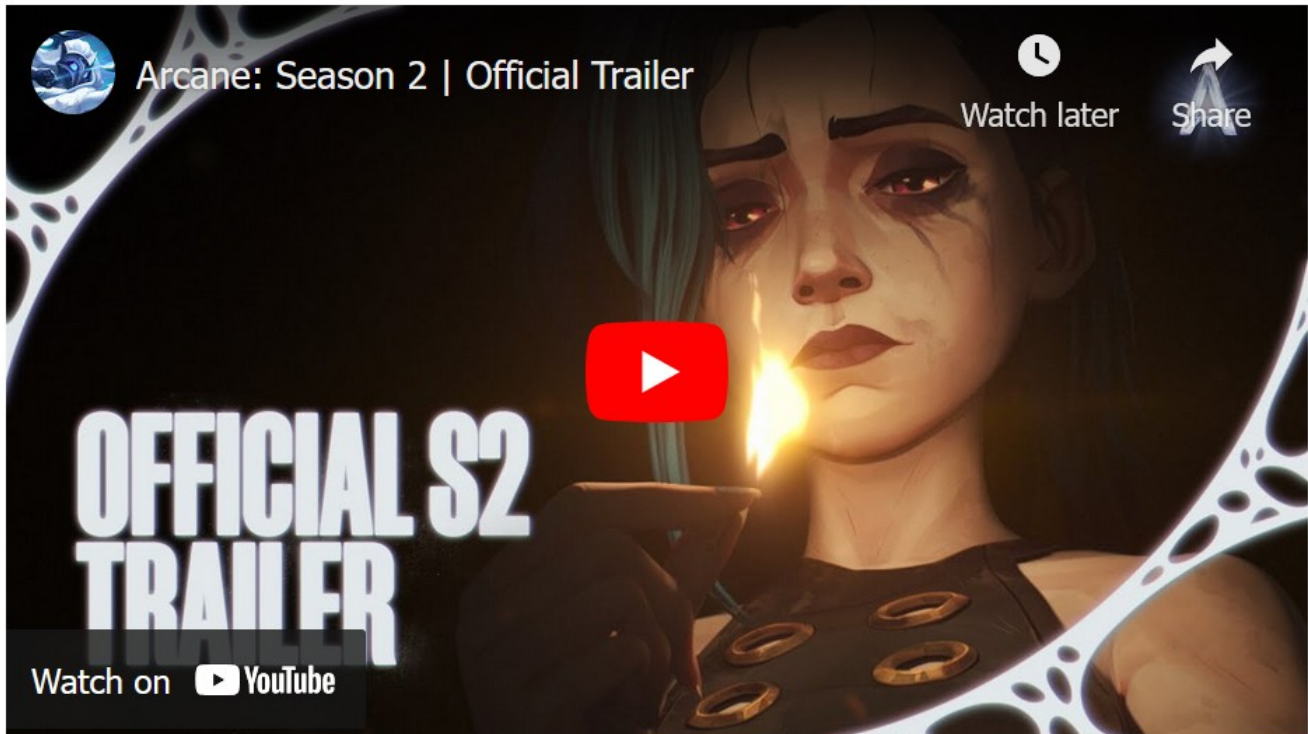
Inori Minase, who voices Berry Blossom / Kaju Noichigo, voiced characters in *yur(ish)* *Kirakira PreCure a la Mode* (Cure Parfait), *Is the Order a Rabbit?* (Chino Kafū), *Gabriel DropOut* (Tapris Sugarbell Chisaki), *A Place Further than the Universe* (Mari Tamaki), and [Kuma Kuma Kuma Bear](#) (Shia Fochurose). She voiced the very gay Sophia Ascart in *My Next Life as a Villainess: All Routes Lead to Doom!*, Viola in *The Duke of Death and His Maid*, and Princess Syalis in *Sleepy Princess in the Demon Castle!* Miharu Hanai, who voices Mashirou, voiced characters in *yur(ish)* *Selection Project* (Shiori Yamaga), *Uma Musume Pretty Derby* (Twin Turbo), *Smile of the Arsnotoria* (Mel), and *World Dai Star* (Xue Wang). Chiharu Sawashiro who voices Tsuki, voiced Heinlein in *Manaria Friends*. Others, like Nobunaga Shimazaki, Showtaro Morikubo, Kengo Kawanishi, Takehito Koyasu, Kōichi Sōma, and Yuji Kameyama are talented, but never voiced characters in *yuri(sh)* series.

Previously, *Love Live! Superstar!!*, *Gun Gale Online Season 2*, *Murder Mystery of the Dead*, and *Mahoutsukai ni Narenakatta Onnanoko no Hanashi*, were described by [the Yuri Empire](#) as having *yuri* themes, while expressing doubt at *yuri* themes in Fall 2024. *Love Live! Superstar!!* continued where seasons 1 and 2 left off. Kanon joined sort-of season 2 antagonist, Wien Margarete, in a new

school idol club group competing with Liella. Kanon has a sort of romance/friendship with Chisato, but its primarily subtext. Shiki Wakana and Mei Yoneme have romantic vibes between them. The third season upset existing dynamics when Kanon decides to work with Wien, and a new girl, Onitsuka Tomari (Natsumi's younger sister), called TomaKanoTe, rather than in Liella. The new ship (Wien / Kanon) pulled in fans, even those who liked the Kanon / Chisato ship.

On October 8th, background artist Davey Cummings [revealed](#) that Max had cancelled *Velma*. While a lot of the backlash was racist, some [still had](#) legitimate issues with the show's "approach to... race and sexuality." In fact, considering [how middling](#) the first season was, I refused to watch season 2. I imagine other viewers felt the same. Some said they didn't care for the series but said it sucked because "[even more](#) animators are out of a job." I can't disagree with that. A few days later, on October 10th, *Tomb Raider: The Legend of Lara Croft*, developed [by Tasha Huo](#), began releasing on Netflix. The action-adventure series was based on the Crystal Dynamics video game entitled *Tomb Raider*. It featured Hayley Atwell as Lara Croft. Huo is a TV writer. Atwell previously voiced Zadra in *3Below: Tales of Arcadia* and voiced Agent Carter in *What If...?*.

On the surface, the series doesn't have any LGBTQ+ characters. However, a Chinese woman, Biyu (voiced by Stephanie Sheh) crushes on protagonist Lara Croft in the second episode. Later, Lara breaks into the homes of two women: Turkish mobster Elvan Kaya and childhood friend Camilla Roth. She convinces Camilla to go on a "little adventure" with her, like old times. While nothing is stated directly, Lara and Camilla clearly had *some* history. Camilla says Lara, in the past, acted "like a sister" to her. Both they tearfully embrace at the end of the fourth episode.



Official trailer of Arcane's second season, on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsffPST-x1k&pp=ygUPYXJjYW5lIHNIYXNvbiAy>.

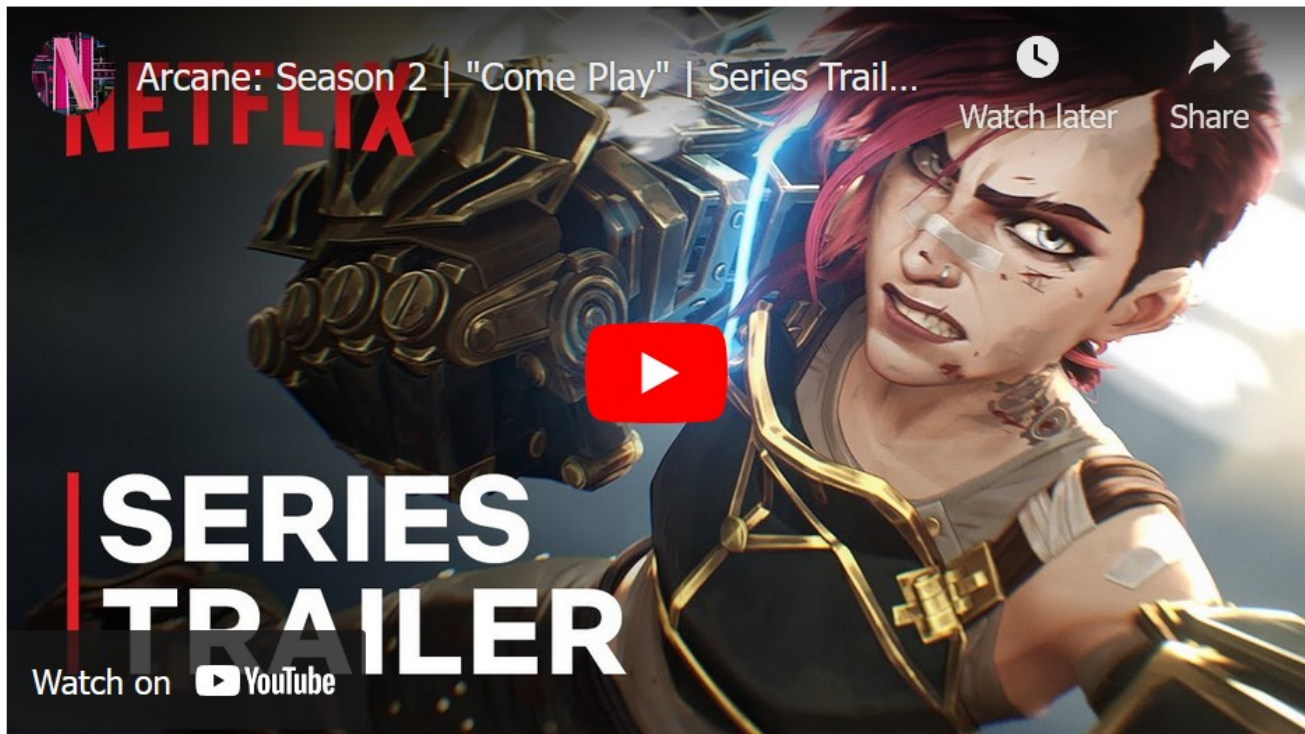
Even so, they clearly have a deep connection. Whether you see it as “romantic” or “just friends,” it’s up to interpretation. She helps Lara gather information and talks with her at an old research lab (in episode 7) during which Lara almost dies from drowning. Camilla saves Lara from the evil monster, saying “you know I love you.” In the final episode, Camilla sees Lara after she brings balance to the world, and tells her to twirl before she goes to Abby and Jonah’s marriage. Lara plans to find Sam after she goes missing. This sets the groundwork for a season 2. Netflix [renewed](#) the series, with [a blogpost](#) saying that the second season will feature Lara going on a new adventure to uncover secrets of African Orisha masks with Sam’s help, and dodging machinations of a “dangerous and enigmatic billionaire.” She will build her team, while *possibly* punching sharks.

In October 18th it [was reported](#) (but not confirmed) that Disney had cancelled *Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur*. The other ten episodes, part of season 2’s [second part](#), will release early [next year](#). This series, if not continued, would end a series [with outward](#) LGBTQ representation like Lunella’s classmate, Tai (voiced by Ian Alexander), an openly trans character named Brooklyn (voiced by Indya

Moore), and Casey's two dads (Isaac and Antonio). The latter two are voiced by Wilson Cruz and Andy Cohen.

On October 24th, the final season of *Star Trek: Lower Decks* began airing on Paramount+. The first two episodes didn't have any LGBTQ+ content, apart from Mariner [being bisexual](#) (primarily). This *isn't shown* in those episodes. The series ended on December 19th. The same day, *The Dragon Prince*, known for LGBTQ+ representation, would end. Before that point, I [published an article](#) about anime centering on female friendships, including some which aired this year, such as *Laid-Back Camp* [season 3], *Wonderful Pretty Cure!*, *Soaring Sky! Pretty Cure*, *Train to the End of the World*, *Jellyfish Can't Swim in the Night*, *Pon no Michi*, *Tonbo!* [season 2], *Love Live! Superstar!!* [season 3], and *Narenare Hanare*. I also noted some Western animation currently streaming (or airing) which also focus on female friendships: *Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur*, *Supa Team 4*, *Totally Spies!* [season 7], and *The Proud Family: Loud and Proud*.

On November 6th, *Girls Band Cry* finally [began airing on Crunchyroll](#), which says a lot [about the failure](#) of Toei Animation to gain licensing agreements. A few days later, on November 9th, the second season of *Arcane* began, following the [first season](#) which released back in November 2021. This season would build upon season one and lesbian romance (between Vi and Caitlyn Kiramman), along with other representation, themes of class oppression, cross-racial relationships, and using science for evil or good. In the second season, Vi comforts Caitlyn following death of Caitlyn's mother at Jinx's hands, until she offers that Vi join her as an enforcer.



Video clip from Arcane's second season: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpQOtc-YgUY>.

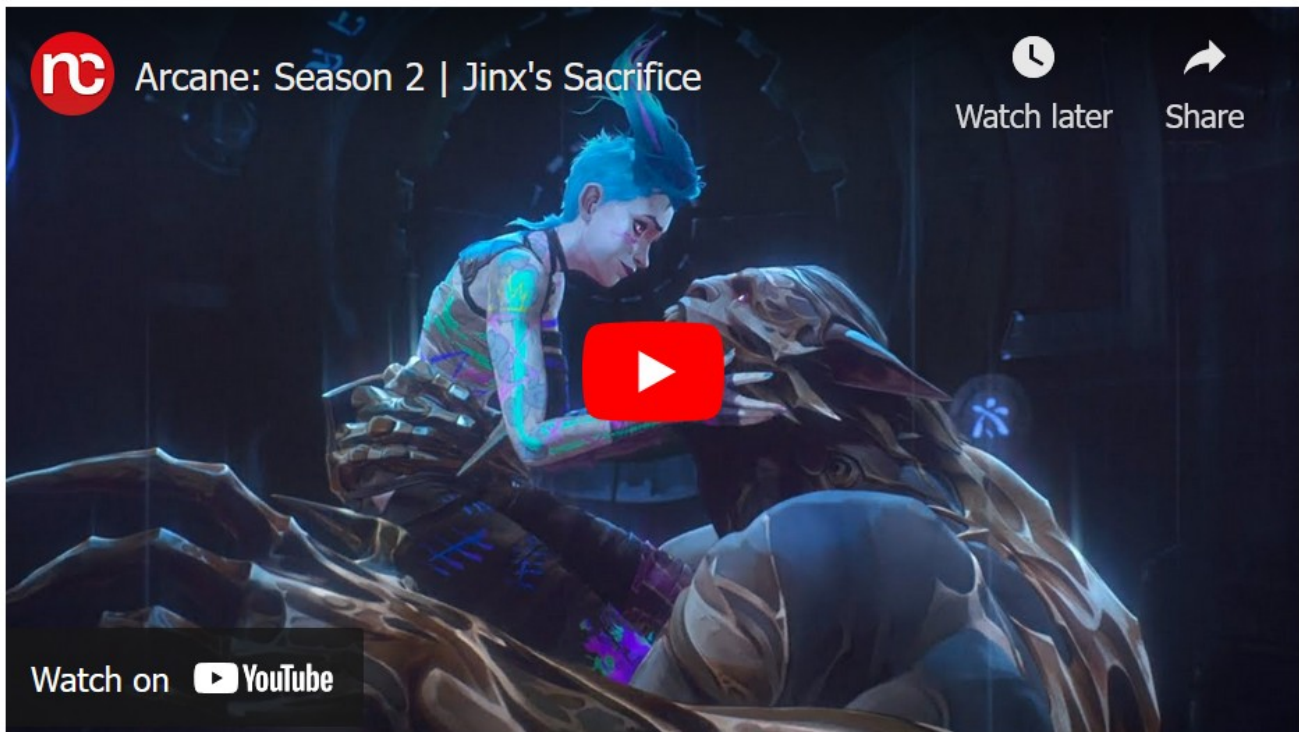
She later agrees to be part of “Piltover’s Finest” (another name for their ship) with Vi by the end of episode one. They kiss in the third episode *two times* (first she initiates it, then Vi does). The same episode has them break up, especially after Cait agrees to invade the undercity! The same day, the second part of the *BanG Dream! My GO!!!!* compilation film, entitled *BanG Dream! Sing, Songs That Become Us & Film Live*, would start to be aired in Japanese theaters. Also, the sixth episode of the *Ranma 1/2* reboot series featured Kodachi having a crush on another girl, Akane Tendo, and Ranma, in his male form, *hinting* that she is bisexual.

On November 13th, a murder mystery anime adaptation of a Japanese game, *Murder Mystery of the Dead*, began. Earlier, some asserted that the series had yuri themes, [citing](#) the fact that Teren Mikami, writer of the light novel (then manga) of *There’s No Freaking Way I’ll be Your Lover! Unless...*, which [also reportedly](#) had an anime adaptation. Mikami co-wrote *Murder Mystery of the Dead* with [Giggle Akiguchi](#). Unfortunately, it didn’t premiere on HIDIVE or Crunchyroll. Also, some reported that Disney hadn’t posted an episode of *Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur* about a trans character (Brooklyn) being discriminated against for being trans (i.e. transphobia). [Early reporting](#) claimed that U.S. presidential election results were the reason. [Later reporting](#) stated that the episode had been held

up for *a year*. It's release date isn't known. *The Owl House* creator Dana Terrace, *Amphibia* creator Matt Braly, and many others, criticized Disney's decision.

At the same time, the relationship between Vi and Caitlyn advanced in *Arcane*'s next three episodes, which aired on November 16th. Caitlyn begins a relationship with another woman, Maddie Nolen. Additionally, there's an implied gay scene in the forty-first *Wonderful PreCure!* episode. Komugi says two male students will "date" to know each other better. Kodachi loses her battle to Ranma in the seventh episode of the *Ranma 1/2* reboot. Kodachi is a character, as noted earlier, who may be bisexual. Some [announced](#) that *Whisper Me a Love Song*'s last two episodes would air on December 28, back-to-back, and a special visual was revealed. [Other reports](#) said that while *Arcane* will not continue, there will be two new projects also using the League of Legends franchise, although it's unclear what those will be.

Even *Star Trek: Lower Decks* had its moments. In the season's third episode, which aired on October 31st, Jennifer claims she is Mariner's girlfriend, to her surprise. She tells her friends that they clearly broke up, until she realizes they *never* actually "fully broke up", and keeps failing to have the right conversation with her. Ultimately, they have a conversation. Jennifer reveals she'd been messing with Mariner the whole time! They [break up](#) on equal terms. It's implied that Jennifer has *other* exes since she says "this is the first time I haven't been mortal enemies with an ex. Exciting!"



Video clip from Arcane's second season: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmDuz0OUNY0&pp=ygUVYXJjYW5lIHNIYXNvbiAyIGFjdCAz>.

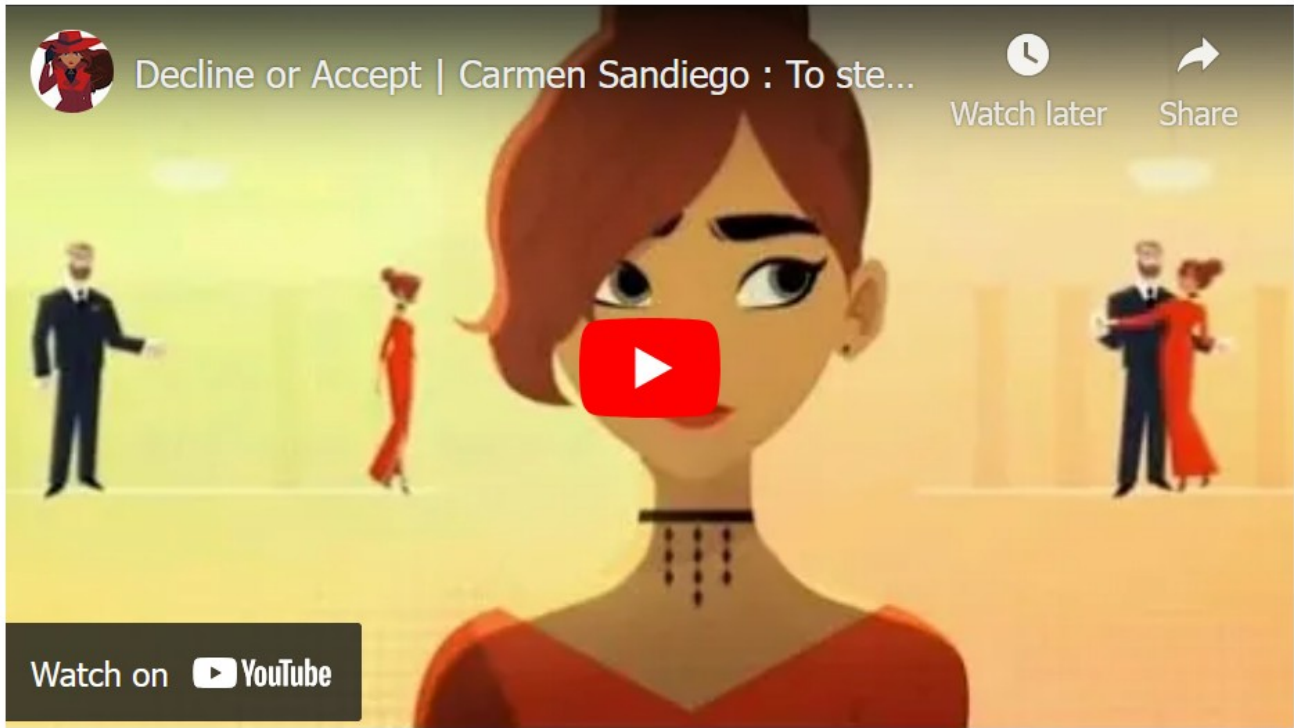
Otherwise, there was yurish content, including vibes between Keke and Kanon, or Kanon and Wien in *Love Live! Superstar!!* season 3, with series continuing to air as autumn turned into winter. Some characters said they “loved” each other as friends, rather than girlfriends, even though they had strong emotional connections. Another episode had Liella, and the group headed by Kanon, named Tomakanote, competing to be *the* school idols of their school. The final *Arcane* episodes aired on November 23rd. Cait and Vi help one another after Jinx surrenders, even as tension remains. Vi calls Maddie, *other* enforcer Cait had a relationship with, a “war pig.” Jinx says that Vi *deserves* to be with Cait. In the penultimate episode, Cait and Vi kiss and have sex. They live together happily ever after in the finale: Cait has an eyepatch, Vi is loving, and Jinx is *possibly* alive.

On November 29th, a compilation film of the *Yohane the Parhelion: Sunshine in the Mirror* [premiered](#) in Japanese theaters. As I noted in [my review](#) of the series, this series has yurish themes, although it leans more on female friendship than anything overtly romantic. On December 1st, Netflix [removed](#) many interactive specials/films and other live-action films. Among this list was one of my favorite interactive films which came off of the *Carmen Sandiego* [animated TV series](#) (which aired on

Netflix from January 2019 to January 2021), entitled *Carmen Sandiego: To Steal or Not to Steal*, and released on March 10, 2020.

The film became a hit online, *in part* for a fantasy dance scene in which Carmen and other characters dance, and Julia Argent is *excited* to see her freestyle dance. This make the shippers of Julia and Carmen (known as Carulia, Carmelia, Carjules, or Julethief) happy. Some people said that the scene is *just* so viewers can see Carmen dance, since the story can proceed smoothly if you decide to decline the dance, and because Carmen looks *out of it* during the *usual* dance. I vaguely recall someone who worked on the series liking that people saw lesbian / bisexual vibes from this dance, although I can't find this comment at this point.

The film, taking place before “The Stockholm Syndrome Caper” episode, [shows](#) Julia and Carmen getting along, and in contact with one another, with Carmen *knowing* where Julia lives. Later, Julia shows off her backless dress and looks at Carmen flirtatiously. The canon path *encourages* players to trust Julia and she agrees to help Carmen. If you choose to *trick* Julia, a message warns that she will remember the trickery. In one canonical path, Julia admires herself, wears Carmen's outfit, and remarks “I'm Carmen Sandiego, and I'm here to make your day.” Her roleplaying *only* ends when her doorbell rings. Outside she *finds all the items* Carmen stole for VILE on her doorstep and a bouquet of nine red roses (symbol of eternal love). She picks up the roses, smells them, and blushes as she states, “thank you, Carmen Sandiego.” So, there's a *lot* of Carulia moments.



video clip from this movie on YouTube: https://youtu.be/f24aAuwmq9I?si=69FQ_sO_OCStkgMc&t=86.

Otherwise, there's the fact that Tigress is grateful if you help her out of a hole rather than leaving her behind. If you do the latter, Carmen attempts a risky rescue mission of her friends Zack and Ivy, who VILE captured, then the mission *fails*. If you help her, then Tigress opens a closed door, allowing Carmen to rescue Zack and Ivy. While this would make shippers of Tigress and Carmen happy, it could *also* imply that after the end of the series they become friends... of sorts.

In the last month of 2024, *Acro Trip* had an episode, which aired on December 5th, featuring Dante Chizuko ("General Dante") working with Berry Blossom. They sit together during a rainstorm, and she falsely thinks Chizuko's niceness is only an act. Both later help a man dangling from a sign in the shopping district, who is *actually* an evil boss. The series ended in mid-December, with Chizuko continuing to love Berry Blossom in her own way. In *Love Live! Superstar*, the two competing music groups merged into Liella (one group into another), changing Liella to an eleven-member group. Female friendship blossomed in *Jentry Chau vs. The Underworld*. In the latter, Jentry Chau is friends with Tokki in South Korea, and later with Stella. There's no queer representation, but the series is amazing, combining Chinese mythology, skillful writing, animation, and storytelling.

It has been announced that *BanG Dream! Ave Mujica*, the music anime sequel to [*BanG Dream! It's MyGO!!!!!*](#) (which aired last year), [will air](#) in January 2025. There are also a number of yuri-ish anime debuting next year. This includes those about bowling (*Turkey!*), working girls ([*A Smile in an Unbearable Workplace*](#)), rock music ([*Rock Is a Lady's Modesty*](#)), and golf (*Sorairo Utility*) along with the second season of *I've Been Killing Slimes for 300 Years and Maxed Out My Level*. Some on social media [speculated](#) that the original film *Grotesque*, to be released in 2025, would have yuri themes, and the same is implied in *Witchy Pretty Cure!! Future Days*. Also, the anime adaptation [of Yowayowa Sensei](#), based on a manga about a “feeble high school teacher” may have those themes too. There likely will be others.

Others noted that *BanG Dream! My GO!!!!!* and *Girls Band Cry* voice actors/performers are having a concert [together](#) in mid-January 2025. Next year, *Walpurgisnacht: Rising*, the [fourth part](#) of *Puella Magi Madoka Magica: The Movie*, based on the 2011 dark fantasy magical girl series, will be released internationally, and premiere in Japan. It was [further reported](#) that *Miss Kobayashi's Dragon Maid: The Lonely Dragon* anime film will air next year, as will an anime film adaptation named *Eiga Senpai wa Otokonoko: Ame Nochi Hare*, on February 14th, and the yuri comedy *There's No Freaking Way I'll Be Your Lover! Unless... on July 25th*. Also, two yuri manga received votes earlier this year (*Kitanai Kimi ga Ichiban Kawaii* (also known as *I Love Your Cruddy...*) and *The Summer You Were There*) to [be adapted](#) into anime.

With the orange one taking the presidential helm in the U.S. next year, it will be even more difficult when it comes to representation, and in the U.S., at least, many executives may be cowardly and only want to promote “safe” content, leading to a dearth of diverse stories, even as series like *Harley Quinn* season 5 premiere in mid-January of next year.



Trailer of Harley Quinn season 5 on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FrB7mJoesq>.

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